



Extreme Cold Weather Tips

Extreme cold weather is once again coming our way, and this weather can be hard on both you, your home and your pets. Many Whitestown residents live in homes that have been built with a water heater or other pipes located in the garage or on exterior walls. **If you live in a home with the water heater or other pipes in the garage, please note that leaving your garage door opened for even a short period of time can cause you to be without water due to frozen pipes.** Please don't hesitate to contact the WMU Water/Sewer Emergency line at (317) 732-4330 if you believe you have a water emergency such as burst pipes causing flooding in your home.

If you find yourself without water during extreme cold weather, it is likely due to frozen pipes. Here are some tips to put into practice when freezing weather, snow, and ice hit the area:

How to Deal with Frozen Pipes

- Disconnect and drain garden hoses.
- Cover outside faucets with insulating foam covers.
- Turn off sprinkler system and blow compressed air through the lines to drain them.
- Close or cover foundation vents under house and windows to basements.
- **Close garage doors.**
- Open cabinet doors under sinks.
- Drip hot and cold faucets in kitchen and bath. Drip single control faucets with lever set in middle.
- Set icemaker to make ice if the water line to it runs under the house.
- Don't forget to check on pipes to your washing machine in the laundry room
- Locate water main cut-off valve, and have a cut-off key handy.
- **Use a safe, plumber approved heat source to thaw frozen pipes that have not burst.**
- Keep the faucet open when thawing frozen pipes to allow water to begin flowing through it.
- **After the weather has warmed above freezing and any frozen pipes have thawed, turn off dripping faucets and monitor your water meter to check for unseen leaks.**

How to Keep Warm in Your Home

- Have your furnace inspected before cold weather arrives. Inspect the heat exchanger for cracks, install a clean air filter, and check the thermostat to see if it's working properly.
- Inspect fireplaces, and chimneys before using, and have them cleaned if needed.
- Keep drapes and blinds closed, except when windows are in direct sunlight.
- Put up storm windows, or install sheet plastic window insulation kits on the inside of windows.
- Cover or remove any window air conditioners.
- Insulate electrical outlets and switches on exterior walls with foam seals available at home centers.
- Caulk any cracks or holes on the outside of your house.
- Repair or replace weather stripping and thresholds around doors and windows.
- Run paddle ceiling fans on low in reverse (clockwise when looking up) to circulate warm air.
- Put draft snakes on window sills, between window frames, and against doors.
- If you heat with propane or fuel oil, make sure the tank is full.
- If you heat with wood or coal, have plenty of fuel on hand.

How to Protect the Outside of Your Home

- Clean your gutters and downspouts before cold weather arrives to prevent ice from forming in them.
- Spray an ice repellent solution on steps and walks before freezing weather arrives
- Check antifreeze levels in cars. Add if needed, then run the engine to circulate the new antifreeze through the radiator and engine block.
- Add freeze resistant windshield wiper fluid, and spray to circulate it in lines.
- Check air pressure in tires, since cold weather causes the pressure to lower.
- Bring in container plants, add mulch around plants, and cover plants that are prone to frost damage. Remove covering when temperatures warm above freezing.
- Drain birdbaths and fountains
- Use rock salt, sand, or clay based kitty litter on walks and drives (NOTE: Salt can damage grass and other plants).
- Don't overdo it when using a snow shovel.
- Stay off your roof during freezing weather, but once the ice and snow have melted, inspect your roof for any damage.

How to Protect Your Pets

- Keep your cat inside. Outdoors, felines can freeze, become lost or be stolen, injured or killed. Cats who are allowed to stray are exposed to infectious diseases, including rabies, from other cats, dogs and wildlife.
- During the winter, outdoor cats sometimes sleep under the hoods of cars. When the motor is started, the cat can be injured or killed by the fan belt. If there are outdoor cats in your area, bang loudly on the car hood before starting the engine to give the cat a chance to escape.
- Never let your dog off the leash on snow or ice, especially during a snowstorm, dogs can easily become lost. Make sure your dog always wears ID tags.
- Thoroughly wipe off your dog's legs and stomach when he comes in out of the sleet, snow or ice. He can ingest salt, antifreeze or other potentially dangerous chemicals while licking his paws, and his paw pads may also bleed from snow or encrusted ice.
- Never leave your dog or cat alone in a car during cold weather. A car can act as a refrigerator in the winter, holding in the cold and causing the animal to freeze to death.
- Puppies do not tolerate the cold as well as adult dogs, and may be difficult to housebreak during the winter. If your puppy appears to be sensitive to the weather, you may opt to paper-train him inside. If your dog is sensitive to the cold due to age, illness or breed type, take him outdoors only to relieve himself.
- Does your dog spend a lot of time engaged in outdoor activities? Increase his supply of food, particularly protein, to keep him, and his fur, in tip-top shape.
- Like coolant, antifreeze is a lethal poison for dogs and cats. Be sure to thoroughly clean up any spills from your vehicle, and consider using products that contain propylene glycol rather than ethylene glycol.
- Make sure your companion animal has a warm place to sleep, off the floor and away from all drafts. A cozy dog or cat bed with a warm blanket or pillow is perfect.

Have A Safe Winter Season!